

PLATO: THE LAST DAYS OF SOCRATES. Translated by Hugh Tredennick. (The Penguin Classics; 2s.)

PLATO: SOCRATIC DIALOGUES. Translated by W. D. Woodhead, with an introduction by G. C. Field. (Nelson; 10s. 6d.)

The consistently high standard of translation in now nearly forty *Penguin Classics* is a most remarkable achievement. The latest of them makes no exception; Mr Tredennick gives us the *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo* in an agreeable English version. Here is a Socrates who speaks the real language of men, not, as so often, some artificial jargon of the study. After this success with dialogues that have surely been, by now, sufficiently often put into English, Mr Tredennick might well consider attempting the badly-needed new version of the *Phaedrus*.

Even with the *Gorgias* thrown in, it is not easy to find justification for yet another merely competent version of the same three dialogues, in Nelson's series of philosophical texts for University students. It might even be suspected that any student likely to make use of this volume is equally like to rest content with Mr Field's twenty pages of introduction, which will tell him all his tutor needs to know.

L.B.

L'AMOUR DU PROCHAIN. (Cahiers de la Vie Spirituelle: Editions du Cerf; Blackfriars Publications; 10s.)

Among the more valuable features of French publishing is the *cahier*, a collection of essays which can deal comprehensively, if sometimes unevenly, with a single theme. Since the war *La Vie Spirituelle* has produced *cahiers* on such subjects as the virtue of Prudence, Penance and Christian Asceticism, and the latest volume, edited by Père Plé, deals with the love of our neighbour as a cardinal factor in Christian life. The pressure of the modern welfare state can seem to reduce the importance of the corporal works of mercy, but the gospels are unambiguous in their identification of the hope of eternal salvation with the practice of the love of our neighbour (expressed, as it must be, in the meeting of all his needs). The present *cahier*, therefore, has a special relevance to contemporary spirituality, which in its turn can sometimes concentrate on personal sanctification without the constant reference to the social context in which human life is to be lived.

Authoritative studies of the virtue of charity in its biblical and theological setting lead on to a consideration of the notion of 'the other' in modern philosophy and its treatment in psychology. With that realism so characteristic of French Catholic writing of this school, the testimony of an Indian and of an unbelieving Marxist is included, and the usual Communist reproaches are provided. But in a final essay, Père Plé sketches the main features of a 'spiritual theology rooted in brotherly love', and has no difficulty in showing how essential to a